



THE CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency

Annual Report to Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers
July 2013



The Honorable Richard A. Robinson
Chairman



Connecticut Judicial Branch
Advisory Committee on
Cultural Competency



Changing Demographics

The Judicial Branch will provide a diverse and culturally competent environment that is sensitive to the values and responsive to the needs of all who interact with it.

***Judicial Branch Strategic Plan
Outcome Goal Number Two
June 2008***



Connecticut Judicial Branch
**Advisory Committee on
Cultural Competency**



Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency Members

The Honorable Richard A. Robinson, Chairman

Paul Bourdoulous, Administrative Services Division

Troy Brown, Court Support Services Division

Karen Chorney, Superior Court Operations Division

Linda J. Cimino, Superior Court Operations Division

Esther Harris, Superior Court Operations Division

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Daisy Ortiz, Court Support Services Division

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Shawna Woodard, Superior Court Operations Division

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Ann Foley, Superior Court Operations Division



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Connecticut Judicial Branch Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency



Chief Justice’s Charge to the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency

Under the second goal – Changing Demographics – of the Judicial Branch’s Strategic Plan, we strive to “provide a diverse and culturally competent environment that is sensitive to the values and responsive to the needs of all who interact with [the Judicial Branch].” Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers formed the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency to move the Branch toward meeting that goal by analyzing and implementing several strategies and activities that were identified to accomplish that goal.

Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency Charge:

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency is charged with assessing the training needs of the Branch and developing an ongoing, comprehensive training program addressing cultural competency for all Judicial Branch staff. It is also charged with prioritizing and implementing the recommendations developed by the Committee on Diversity in the Branch Workforce, a phase one initiative of the strategic plan, which was created to recommend an action plan to promote and ensure diversity in the hiring and retention of Branch employees and to ensure a culturally competent workforce.



Connecticut Judicial Branch Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency



Summary of Accomplishments

The Advisory Committee and its members accomplished several items over the last twelve months, all of which contributed to the Chief Justice's charge and the goal of improving cultural competency throughout the Judicial Branch. The following is a brief summary of selected accomplishments that the Advisory Committee directly facilitated or contributed to:

Analyzed Focus Group Results

In 2011 and 2012, The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency conducted 20 separate focus groups throughout the Judicial Districts. These focus groups were facilitated by Judicial Branch staff and were comprised of employees from all Judicial Branch divisions. The information gathered from the focus groups, as well as feedback from employees on their experience, was recorded, summarized, and analyzed by the Advisory Committee and its members. Results were published on the intranet website for all employees to see.

Revised Definition

One direct result of the focus group feedback was the immediate revision of the Advisory Committee's Working Definition of the term Cultural Competency. The revised definition reflects Judicial Branch employee support to simplify, remove negative aspects, and incorporate the Judicial Branch's core values. Additional information about the revised definition can be found in this report as well as in the employee focus group responses in the Appendix.

New Website

The Advisory Committee continues to update and add to its intranet page, which is accessible to all Judicial Branch employees at <http://zeus/cc/>. The intranet page provides a link to the Advisory Committee agendas and minutes, the responses and feedback from the internal focus groups, and a new email account for employees to submit questions or suggestions to the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee uses the intranet page to share information with employees and highlight Judicial Branch activities related to cultural competence.



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Piloted Training Course Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness

In 2012 and 2013 the Advisory Committee successfully developed a comprehensive initial course titled Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness. The course was carefully designed by experienced committee members to meet the specific needs and diverse services of the Judicial Branch. Over the last ten (10) months, the Advisory Committee piloted four 2-day sessions of Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness to over 140 Judicial Branch employees from all five divisions as well as 25 CSSD contracted services employees attended the programs. Additional information about the course design, delivery, and employee feedback is included in this report.

Facilitated Presentations

The Advisory Committee also contributed to the preparation and delivery of several presentations on the topic of cultural competency. The Advisory Committee believes that the topic of cultural competency should be discussed through a variety of mediums, in addition to a formal training course.

a. 2013 State Judges Institute

The Advisory Committee Chairman, the Honorable Richard A. Robinson, delivered a plenary session on the topic of cultural competency at the 2013 State Judges Institute. Judge Robinson partnered with other Judicial Branch Strategic Plan Committees, including the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Committee and the ADA Advisory Board to inform Judges on the various new services the Branch has available to the public. The session included a discussion on skills and strategies regarding cultural competency that are relevant for Judges.

b. Muslim Coalition of Connecticut

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency invited a representative from the Muslim Coalition of Connecticut to present information on Islam and Muslims. The Muslim Coalition of Connecticut is a not-for-profit organization, whose mission is to promote shared values of mutual respect and social responsibility through educational and outreach activities. The presentation was offered by the Committee to help increase awareness of and information about the various cultures and individuals that use Judicial Branch services. The presentation was a tremendous success with employees asking for additional presentations. The Muslim Coalition was recognized by the Judicial Branch as part of 2013 Law Day for their contributions to Connecticut.



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c. Presentation on Ethnomusicology

In May 2013, Advisory Committee members attended a presentation on Ethnomusicology. The invited speaker, Matthew DelCiampo, is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Musicology from Florida State University. He received his Master of Music in Ethnomusicology from Florida State University. Mr. DelCiampo discussed his research and discussed significant social and cultural components in the creation of music.

d. 2013 Jury Conference - Cultural Competence: Jury Service and the Latino Community

On June 14, 2013 Jury Administration presented its annual Jury Conference. The goal of the Jury Conference is to provide relevant and helpful jury information with a focus on updating individuals involved with the jury process. This year's presentation topics included: Jury in the Information Age; Cultural Competence: Jury Service and the Latino Community; and other interactive workshops.



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Working Definition of Cultural Competency

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency was provided with an original working definition of *cultural competency* from a prior committee that was formed.

Original Working Definition (2010)

Cultural competence is a set of behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals to enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

In practice it means that a person learns to recognize and reject his or her assumptions about culture; focuses on understanding information provided by an individual within the context at hand; and foregoes the temptation to classify or label persons with cultural misinformation. It is the ability to communicate, cooperate and work with people from all cultural identities in a way that promotes respect, dignity and fairness.

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency incorporated the feedback provided by Judicial Branch employees after numerous focus group sessions and revised its working definition of the term *cultural competency*. The revised definition reflects Judicial Branch employee support to simplify, remove negative aspects, and incorporate the Judicial Branch's core values.

Revised Working Definition (2013)

Cultural Competency is the ability of the Judicial Branch and its employees to communicate, cooperate, and serve people from all cultural identities with respect, professionalism, integrity, and fairness in a manner that recognizes the individual dignity of each person.



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Why Does the Judicial Branch Need Training in Cultural Competency?

Under the revised working definition, cultural competency incorporates the Judicial Branch's four core values (respect, professionalism, integrity, and fairness) and connects those values to the effective delivery of services for people from all cultural identities.

Although cultural competency may be a new term for many Judicial Branch employees, the principles have been an integral part of the Branch and its services for years. The following is a brief overview of several Judicial Branch efforts and recent national organizational efforts that have set the stage for formal cultural competency training in 2013:

- Connecticut General Statutes 46a-70 and 46a-70a requiring the Judicial Branch to conduct continuing orientation and training programs with an emphasis on human relations and nondiscriminatory employment practices.
- Connecticut General Statutes 46a-54 (16) requiring the Judicial Branch to provide a minimum of 3 hours of diversity training and education including (ii) the standards for working with and serving persons from diverse populations.
- 1996 Connecticut Judicial Branch Task Force on Minority Fairness
 - Task force confirmed that both real and perceived racial and ethnic biases existed in the Connecticut judicial system, and that there were profound differences in the way minorities and non-minorities perceive the workings and attitudes of the Connecticut judicial system
 - The Task Force recommended: *Comprehensive, mandatory cultural sensitivity education and training initiatives should be available for all Judicial Branch personnel at all levels of the system.*
- 2007 Connecticut Judicial Branch conducted extensive focus groups with internal and external stakeholders (http://jud.ct.gov/Committees/pst/pst_focus.pdf).

Several external stakeholder groups recommended cultural competency training for Judicial Branch employees (including: African American Affairs Commission & NAACP; the Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims; Commission on Aging;



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Minority Bar Associations; Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities; Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity; and others).

- 2008 Judicial Branch Strategic Plan – Outcome Goal Two: The Judicial Branch will provide a diverse and culturally competent environment that is sensitive to the values and responsive to the needs of all who interact with it.
 - Develop and implement effective training programs designed to promote cultural competence; and
- 2010 Judicial Branch – Court Support Services Division (CSSD) Strategic Plan – Goal Five: The CSSD will engage in activities that provide a diverse, gender responsive and culturally competent environment for staff and clients that is sensitive to values and responsive to needs.
- 2011 and 2012 Branchwide Employee Focus Groups - the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency conducted twenty (20) focus group sessions with Judicial Branch employees on the topic of cultural competency. Employee feedback, responses, and evaluations were compiled and analyzed by the Advisory Committee. This information was also made available to all Branch employees through the Branch intranet and Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency home page at <http://zeus/CC/default.htm>. Judicial Branch employees provided the following feedback regarding training:
 - The focus groups strongly expressed a need for training on cultural competency;
 - Employees felt that cultural competency training was not a one-size fits all topic and that it should come in multiple forms;
 - Develop a Branch-wide training program to ensure employees from all divisions and units could equally attend;
 - Build on the skills covered in the Branch's The Power of Diversity program for new employees;
 - Deliver training at the local and or regional level;
 - Develop an introductory course;
 - Supplement formal instruction with facilitated discussions and community presentations.



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- The American Bar Association (ABA) Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants: Standard 2.4 Cultural Competence¹:
 - *A provider should ensure that its staff has the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to provide assistance in a culturally competent manner.*
 - *Each legal aid provider has a fundamental responsibility to establish a relationship of confidence and trust with the clients whom it represents and to understand and respond to the needs of all of the low income communities that it serves, including those that are culturally and linguistically diverse.*
- National Center for State Courts (NCSC) – Helping Courts to Address Implicit Bias
 - *Everyone, judges and other court professionals included, harbors attitudes and stereotypes that influence how he or she perceives and interacts with the social world. Because these cognitive processes can operate implicitly, or at a level below conscious awareness, they can bias judgment and behavior in ways that go unnoticed by the individual.*
 - Implicit Bias – A Primer for Courts:
<http://www.ncsc.org/~media/Files/PDF/Topics/Gender%20and%20Racial%20Fairness/kanglBprimer.ashx>
- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFC) - *Create policies and procedures that are responsive to cultural differences and train personnel to be culturally competent.*

¹ ABA Publication Standards For the Provision of Civil Legal Aid at:
http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/legal_aid_indigent_defendants/ls_sclaid_civillegalaidstds2007.authcheckdam.pdf



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Connecticut Judicial Branch *Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness*

Background

The development of an effective cultural competency training program takes time. A meaningful discussion about cultural competency can cover everything from interpersonal communication, human relationships, organizational culture, delivery of services, as well as a variety of delicate topics such as race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

A training program that does not carefully define its message and carefully navigate its training points can do more harm than good. Simply put, one cannot download or borrow a developed cultural competency training program and use it to train or develop Connecticut Judicial Branch employees, officers, Judges, or magistrates.

As a starting point, several members of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency attended and completed a year-long multicultural training certificate program through the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). This intensive training experience along with additional research and other professional development seminars provided the backbone for the development of an introductory training program as well as pool of potential training facilitators.

The Advisory Committee conducted numerous focus groups with Judicial Branch employees, revised its working definition, and spent over a year developing and testing the curriculum and content for a new program titled Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness.

The Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness training program was specifically designed to meet the various needs and diverse services of the Judicial Branch. The following is an overview of the training program:



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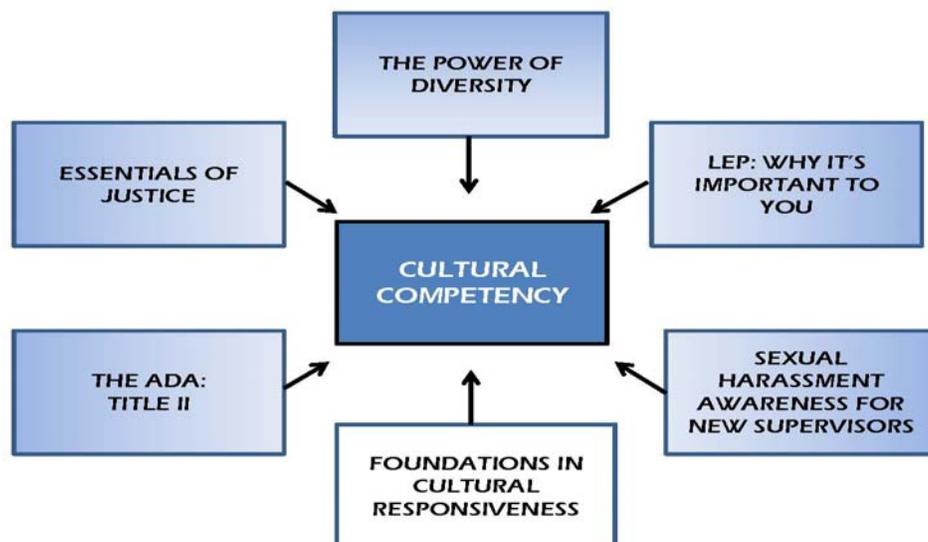
Overview of Course Content, Design, and Learning Objectives

1. Connection to Other Judicial Branch Efforts

The Advisory Committee strongly believes that meaningful training in cultural competency cannot be accomplished through a single training program. As a topic, cultural competency directly relates to and supports several existing Judicial Branch efforts and activities. As such, the curriculum was specifically designed to support and reinforce those initiatives, without duplicating their efforts.

The Advisory Committee chose to use the term “*Responsiveness*” in the course title to 1) reinforce that more than one training program is designed to improve the Branch’s level of cultural competence, 2) to avoid the negative and incorrect assumptions employees have about the term competence when associated with training (e.g. *I expect to learn information so I will be competent in minority cultural norms and practices*), and 3) *Responsiveness* more appropriately describes the course’s focus on having respect for cultural differences.

The image below visually depicts Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness and its connection with other related Judicial Branch training initiatives.





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Course Content

The Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness training program covers six (6) major substantive content areas determined by the Advisory Committee to be essential for cultural competency and applicable to every and any position in the Judicial Branch. The substantive content areas are as follows:

- I. Judicial Efforts on Cultural Competency
 - a. History
 - b. Current Committees and Efforts related to Cultural Competency
- II. What Does Cultural Competency mean to you?
 - a. Definitions (Awareness, Diversity, Responsiveness, Competency)
 - b. What is Cultural Diversity?
- III. What is the Importance of Building Cultural Competency?
 - a. Overview of the increasing diversity within the US
- IV. Stereotypes Vs. Cultural Patterns
 - a. Impact of misinformation (stereotypes)
 - b. Why do we stereotype
 - c. Stereotype vs. Cultural Patterns
 - d. How to get off automatic
- V. Implicit Bias
 - a. National Center for state courts addressing Implicit Bias
 - b. How Implicit Bias effects our decision making
- VI. Micro Messages
 - a. What are micro messages
 - b. What can we do to control micro-messages

All six substantive content areas are presented using a standard facilitation model intentionally designed to maximize participant involvement and contribution to the



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learning through lecture, multimedia presentations or graphics, group exercises, and facilitated discussions.

Lecture – Facilitators introduce the content area through lecture, presentation, and reference to external authorities on the subject matter.

Multimedia Presentation or Graphic – The content area covered in lecture is supplemented by a multimedia presentation, most often a video, or a visual graphic that reinforces or demonstrates the relevant content area. The following video selections and graphics are all used in Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness:

- Iceberg Model (Graphic)
- Diversity Wheel (Graphic)
- Stereotypes vs. Cultural Patterns (Graphic)
- A Class Divided (Video – Frontline PBS Production)
- Testing for Racial Hidden Bias (Video Dateline NBC Production)

Group Exercises – Participants are then divided into small groups to review the content area and its application to the multimedia presentation or graphic. Groups are given a specific assignment, topic or case study to discuss. Group exercises are designed to reinforce learning and to ensure participants apply the relevant content.

Active Debrief/Facilitated Discussion – After group exercises, the groups are required to publically summarize and or present on their particular assignment, thereby using “teach to learn” strategies to further develop everyone’s understanding of the material.

2. Course Design and Timing

Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness is delivered over two (2) full days (14 total hours of learning). This format and time commitment enables facilitators to cover the content in the format described above.

The Advisory Committee also believes the two-day commitment communicates the Judicial Branch’s 1) organizational value of investing in its human capital, and 2) the organizational value of cultural competence to the delivery of Judicial Branch services.



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Course registration shall be managed through the Judicial Branch's Learning Management System (LMS), which provides for the centralized storing of training records.

Included in the Appendix (Appendix A) is a copy of the power point slides, group exercises, and visual graphics.

3. Learning Objectives

1. Participants will have a basic understanding of Judicial Branch cultural competency efforts;
2. Participants will know and understand Judicial Branch policies on diversity and cultural competency;
3. Participants will understand why cultural competency is important in the workplace;
4. Participants will gain an increased sense of their own cultural identity;
5. Participants will have an increased awareness of how misunderstandings can occur;
6. Employees will learn cross-cultural communication strategies;
7. Employees will learn strategies that will enable them to provide better service to both internal and external Judicial Branch stakeholders.

4. Pre-Test and Post-Test

Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness administers a Pre-Test and Post-Test to all participants. These tests measure the increase in knowledge and skill that the participants obtained as a result of the training course. Administering these tests enables the Advisory Committee to assess whether participants learned what was intended and whether the facilitators were able to meet the stated learning objectives.



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Course Evaluations and Feedback

Over the last ten (10) months, the Advisory Committee through the CSSD Training Academy delivered four 2-day sessions of Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness to over 140 Judicial Branch employees and 25 CSSD contracted services employees.

Experienced employees from all five divisions attended the programs, as well as recently hired employees to the positions of Adult Probation Officer and Juvenile Detention officer.

Course evaluations and participant feedback was very positive. The following are selections of course evaluation analysis from the Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness. Full course evaluations are included in the Appendix.

- 100% of the participants agree or strongly agree that after attending this training, they have gained an understanding as to why cultural competency is important in the workplace.
- 100% of the participants agree or strongly agree that after attending this training, they have gained a heightened awareness of their own cultural lenses and how it may impact individuals from other groups.
- 92% of participants agree or strongly agree that after attending this training, they have learned about Implicit Bias and its effects on decision making.
- 96% of the participants agree or strongly agree that this training would be beneficial to others in their division/unit.
- 100% of the participants would recommend this training to a colleague.

The following are a few comments from participants.

- *I found the training to be enlightening. Troy Brown and Daisy Ortiz were so engaging. I come away with better understanding of the cultures and the differences among people and how this understanding can help me to effectively help people of different cultures.*
- *This training helped me realize there was a lot I do not know. Even the smallest bias can affect my staff and client. I believe this training can be helpful to all, including my own supervisor. The energy and approach the trainers had was very good, and created an open learning environment.*
- *This was an excellent training. I recommend this training to all staff not just supervisors.*
- *Very eye opening!! Can't wait to share with others.*



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- *I enjoyed this training as it was unlike any cultural competency training I have ever attended. I appreciated the atmosphere created in order to discuss very difficult topics. I liked the format and that it allowed participants to get to know others in the room rather than a pure lecture format.*



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Proposed Implementation Plan

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency formally recommends the following Proposed Implementation Plan for the delivery of Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness in the Judicial Branch.

- Deliver Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness through:
 - Court Support Services Division Training Academy; and
 - Superior Court Operations Division Staff Development Unit;
 - As appropriate, through the Judges' Education Committee;
- The Advisory Committee, and its members, do not have the resources to implement a Branch-wide training program. Advisory Committee members are professionals across all divisions with core functions connected to the delivery of various Judicial Branch services. However, the Advisory Committee will:
 - Manage the content and delivery for consistency (including 2-day format, learning objectives, and content areas);
 - Ensure training opportunities are available for Administrative Services Division, External Affairs Division, and Information Technology Division employees;
 - Oversee the course evaluation and overall enrollment that is occurring via the LMS; and
 - Produce a single annual report to the Chief Justice on the status of Branch training.
- Utilizing the existing training departments will provide the following benefits:
 - Utilization of existing administrative resources (for scheduling, preparing training material, reserving rooms etc.);
 - Provision of an expanded pool of potential facilitators as well as resources to develop facilitators;



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- Divisions are empowered to customize the delivery of content to reflect specific division/ unit services (e.g. structuring a discussion to account for the specific environment or challenges juvenile detention officers, judicial marshals, or court clerks may encounter). Customization will promote participant learning and application of content to work responsibilities.



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Accountability and Performance Measures

The Advisory Committee recognizes the importance and value of having processes for both individual and organizational accountability.

Individual Accountability

The Judicial Branch Strategic Plan Outcome Goal Five – Accountability states that the achievement of this outcome goal will be measured by increased understanding on the part of the Judicial Branch staff regarding their responsibilities to all whom interact with the Branch.

To this end, employee responsibilities are covered in the Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness. The Advisory Committee further recommends that the Chief Justice consider the committee's prior proposal to incorporate the four core values of the Judicial Branch into the expectations for employees through the performance appraisal system. A copy of the proposal is included in the Appendix (Appendix C: Public Service Proposal (Draft)).

Organizational Accountability

The Advisory Committee proposes the following initial performance measures, which it will report out annually. The Advisory Committee further commits to the research and development of additional performance measures and performance management measures.

The Advisory Committee plans to reach out to the external stakeholders who previously recommended that cultural competency training be developed and delivered to Judicial Branch employees, including: the African American Affairs Commission & NAACP; the Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims; Commission on Aging; Minority Bar Associations; Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities; Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity; and others. The Advisory Committee plans to review Judicial Branch efforts to improve cultural competency as well as the proposed training modules and format for Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness.



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Goal 2: Changing Demographics – Cultural Competency Performance Measures				
Standard II.1 - Judicial Branch workforce reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of those who interact with the Branch		Baseline	Year	Target
II.1.a	The utilization rate of Judicial Branch workforce across job categories against the Community Labor Statistics	Branch EEO Plan		
II.2.b	The number of job categories that under-represent individuals of certain Race and National Origin	Branch EEO Plan		
Standard II.2 - Judicial Branch staff, programs, and services are responsive to the ethnic and cultural differences of its participants		Baseline	2013	Target
II.2.a	The number and percentage of Judicial Branch employees that received training to improve staffs' ability to effectively serve participants across diverse cultures and ethnicities			
II.2.b	The number of training hours completed annually that improve staffs' ability to effectively serve participants across diverse cultures and ethnicities			
I.2.c	The number and percentage of training programs offered that incorporated principles of diversity and or cultural competency			
I.2.d	Courthouse Observation Team results that asses the quality of services (Draft)			
i.2.e	Survey Response – Satisfaction Index (Draft)			



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Recommendations

In addition to implementing and delivering a Branchwide training initiative in cultural competency, the Advisory Committee would like for the Chief Justice and the Judicial Branch to consider the following recommendations.

Diversity Day

Re-establish an annual, Branchwide, Diversity Day to acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity and harmony. This event should be held at a Judicial Branch location, and great consideration should be taken to keep expenses at a minimum.

Honorarium for Community Presentations

The Advisory Committee responded to Branch employees' recommendation to supplement formal instruction with facilitated discussions and community presentations by experts in the field of cultural competency. In April of 2013, the Muslim Coalition of Connecticut gave a presentation on Islam and Muslims that was favorably received by Branch employees. This learning event was free of cost as we utilized a Branch location to hold the event and the speaker's time was gratis.

The Advisory Committee has identified other speakers and organizations to invite – many who request a small honorarium of about \$100-\$200 dollars. We respectfully ask for the Branch's financial support to solicit these speakers and organizations on a quarterly basis.

Standards for Public Service

In a previous section of this report, *Accountability and Performance Measures*, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Chief Justice consider the committee's prior proposal to incorporate the four core values of the Judicial Branch into the expectations for employees through the performance appraisal system. A copy of the draft proposal is included in the Appendix (Appendix C: Public Service Proposal (Draft)).



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Appendix A: PowerPoint Slides and Facilitator Notes



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Appendix B: Course Evaluation

Condensed Item Analysis Report

The Location/room was a comfortable setting

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.38
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	1	3.85	<div style="width: 3.85%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	1	3.85	<div style="width: 3.85%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	11	42.31	<div style="width: 42.31%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	13	50.00	<div style="width: 50.00%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

The length of training was appropriate

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.81
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	5	19.23	<div style="width: 19.23%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	2	7.69	<div style="width: 7.69%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	12	46.15	<div style="width: 46.15%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	7	26.92	<div style="width: 26.92%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

I liked the way the training was structured with lectures exer

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.73
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	7	26.92	<div style="width: 26.92%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	19	73.08	<div style="width: 73.08%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

The training met my expectations for foundational cultural com

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.42
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	2	7.69	<div style="width: 7.69%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	11	42.31	<div style="width: 42.31%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	13	50.00	<div style="width: 50.00%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

The trainers were skilled in facilitating discussions on cultu

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.92
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	2	7.69	<div style="width: 7.69%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	24	92.31	<div style="width: 92.31%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

After attending this training I have a basic understanding of

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.54
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	12	46.15	<div style="width: 46.15%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	14	53.85	<div style="width: 53.85%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

After attending this training I am able to differentiate betwe

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.50
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	1	3.85	<div style="width: 3.85%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	11	42.31	<div style="width: 42.31%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	14	53.85	<div style="width: 53.85%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

After attending this training I have gained an understanding o

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.35
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Disagree	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Neither Agree or Disagree	2	7.69	<div style="width: 7.69%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Agree	13	50.00	<div style="width: 50.00%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Strongly Agree	11	42.31	<div style="width: 42.31%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>
Missing	0	0.00	<div style="width: 0%; height: 15px; background-color: blue;"></div>

After attending this training I have gained and understanding

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.65
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Agree	9	34.62	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	17	65.38	<input type="text"/>
Missing	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>

After attending this training I have developed an understandin

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.65
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Agree	9	34.62	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	17	65.38	<input type="text"/>
Missing	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>

After attending this training I have learned about Implicit Bi

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.60
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>
Agree	8	30.77	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	16	61.54	<input type="text"/>
Missing	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>

After attending this training I have learned strategies for po

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.56
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>
Agree	9	34.62	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	15	57.69	<input type="text"/>
Missing	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>

After attending this training I have gained a heightened aware

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.50
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Agree	13	50.00	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	13	50.00	<input type="text"/>
Missing	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>

After attending this training I have learned tips to decrease

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.23
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	2	7.69	<input type="text"/>
Agree	13	50.00	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	10	38.46	<input type="text"/>
Missing	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>

After attending this training I have learned about micro-messa

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.56
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>
Agree	9	34.62	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	15	57.69	<input type="text"/>
Missing	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>

I feel this training would be beneficial to others at my agenc

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 4.65
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Disagree	1	3.85	<input type="text"/>
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>
Agree	6	23.08	<input type="text"/>
Strongly Agree	19	73.08	<input type="text"/>
Missing	0	0.00	<input type="text"/>

I would recommend this training to a colleague

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 1.00
Yes	26	100.00	
No	0	0.00	
Missing	0	0.00	

I am interested in becoming a Cultural Competency Advisory Com

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.47
Yes	9	34.62	
No	10	38.46	
Missing	7	26.92	

I am interested in attending other trainings related to cultur

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 1.00
Yes	26	100.00	
No	0	0.00	
Missing	0	0.00	

Foundations In Cultural Responsiveness - Participant Evaluation Comments March 1, 2013

- 1** Thank you to both presenters for keeping this training interesting and keeping the audience attentive. I enjoyed both days.
I could have done without the videos on Day 1. Two days is a big commitment. A condensed skill-
- 2** based training would be beneficial. The training was incredibly enjoyable. It was great to see how willing people are to share for the greater good.
- 3** Daisy and Troy did excellent. Training was fun and interactive. Should be made mandatory.
- 4** Excellent training. The material was well delivered and received. The subject matter was very thought provoking.
- 5** The first day was the best designed training I have seen in a very long time. Want more detail, more tools I can use.
- 6** Temperature control in the room was an issue. Presenters were excellent. Experience was valuable and enlightening.
- 7** I would have liked more tips in addition to common things to avoid.
Fabulous training. Learned so much in so little time. Micro-messages were right on. Troy and
- 8** Daisy-excellent facilitators. Cultural awareness, diversity and competency exploration was in depth and very informative. What makes up cultural ID=excellent.
- 9** Troy is a very strong presenter. It is hard to teach so long each day. Wish Daisy had a more prominent role in training.
- 10** I really enjoyed this training. It should be mandatory for all Judicial Staff Employees. Troy and Daisy are an asset to Cultural Competency training and should be applauded and efforts duplicated.
- 11** I found the training to be enlightening. Troy Brown and Daisy Ortiz were so engaging. I come away with better understanding of the cultures and the differences among people and how this understanding can help me to effectively help people of different cultures.
- 12** Excellent resource and important topic.
- 13** Great efforts by trainers. Loved the strategies presented.
- 14** Any areas where I felt time should have been more comprehensive coverage resulted from time limitations, not due to facilitating. They were outstanding.
- 15** Great training. Would like to see it delivered over 3 days to allow for more discussion.



Connecticut Judicial Branch
Advisory Committee on
Cultural Competency



Appendix C: Public Service Proposal (Draft)



Connecticut Judicial Branch Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency



Public Service Expectations Proposal

The following are a selection of comments and suggestions made by Judicial Branch employees during the Advisory Committee's 2011 focus group sessions:

- *Cultural Competency includes the basic principles of respect and public service.*
- *Cultural Competency needs to start at the top. It is one part of public service and must be included into our core functions. There must be a commitment to providing resources and to accountability in the area of public service.*
- *Cultural Competency training will only achieve the desired outcome if there is a commitment to applying the standards in the office and holding people accountable for their actions and interactions through the performance appraisal process.*

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency makes the following observations:

- The current Judicial Branch Employee Performance Appraisals do not have a specific performance element or standard to evaluate an employee's performance in the area of public service.
 - Two of the three appraisals have the following element contained within "C. Communication: Provides professional service to both internal and external clients"
- The Branch does not have established administrative policy guidelines on public service, other than the statement contained in Administrative Policy 101: Judicial Branch Mission:
 - *All Judicial Branch employees are expected to demonstrate a positive attitude toward their work and a commitment to quality service to the customers of the Branch and the public.*
- Judicial Branch Strategic Plan, Outcome Goal Five: Accountability – *The achievement of this goal will be measured by increased understanding on the part of the Judicial Branch staff regarding their responsibilities to all who interact with the Branch.*

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency makes the following recommendations:

- Develop specific expectations for Judicial Branch employees to guide their interactions with the public..
- Update the three Judicial Branch Employee Performance Appraisals to incorporate these expectations as uniform performance elements that evaluate public service by Judicial Branch employees and reinforce the policy expectations contained in Administrative Policy 101: Judicial Branch Mission.
- The Advisory Committee asserts that this enhancements will:
 - Provide, clarity, consistency and uniformity in the expectations of public service by employees;
 - provide a process to hold employees accountable and recognize employees for their interactions with the public and other stakeholders;
 - further advance the goals and objectives contained in several Branch Strategic Plan activities, including, Cultural Competency, ADA, Self-represented Parties, Pillars of Service Excellence, Access to Justice, and the Courthouse Observation Team.



Connecticut Judicial Branch
Advisory Committee on
Cultural Competency



Appendix D: Focus Group Results



Connecticut Judicial Branch
Advisory Committee on
Cultural Competency



**Employee Focus Groups
Executive Summary**

Over the past twelve months, the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency conducted twenty (20) focus group sessions with Judicial Branch employees on the topic of cultural competency. The focus groups were conducted across the state and included employees from all levels and all divisions. Each session was a facilitated discussion where employees shared candid thoughts and experiences concerning the following questions:

1. What does cultural competency mean to you?
2. What topics or issues related to cultural competency do you face in your position or division?
3. In what areas do you believe the Judicial Branch could be more culturally competent?
4. How will a better understanding of cultural competency help you and your co-workers perform at work and deliver quality public service?
5. Review the Branch's working definition of cultural competency and respond whether or not it accurately captures what you shared and discussed today.

Employee feedback, responses, and evaluations were compiled and analyzed by the Advisory Committee. This information was also made available to all Branch employees through the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency home page at: <http://zeus/CC/default.htm>. The Advisory Committee believes that employee feedback and input should be an instrumental factor in developing and directing the Branch activities that support and or improve our level of cultural competency.

The following is a summary of the top five (5) themes that employees shared:

1) Modify the Branch's Current Working Definition of Cultural Competency

The Committee received strong feedback from employees that the current working definition did not reflect their own understanding of cultural competency, it read like a formal policy, it was bureaucratic, and it came across as being critical. Employees recommended that the definition be simplified and focus on providing effective public service. The participants also noted that cultural competency is evolving and that the Branch definition should be flexible so it could also evolve. A copy of the current working definition is attached.

As a result, the Advisory Committee proposes the following definition of cultural competency, which incorporates employee feedback.

Cultural Competency is the ability of the Judicial Branch and its employees to communicate, cooperate, and serve people from all cultural identities with respect, professionalism, integrity, and fairness in a manner that recognizes the individual dignity of each person.

2) Commitment from Judicial Branch Administration and Leadership

Employees from several focus groups stressed the importance of having a commitment from Judicial Branch administration and leadership. Employees felt that the focus group sessions were a great start; however, to truly improve the delivery of services to various cultural identities requires a serious resource commitment. Employees offered the following examples that may illustrate the Branch's lack of commitment: the end of the annual Diversity Day program; low staffing levels in the courthouses and/or offices; lack of interpreters; lack of training resources; the number of forms or publications available in other languages; and reduced staffing for court service centers. Employees specifically stated that the approach or philosophy that we must "do more with less" will not improve the Branch's level of cultural competency.

3) Judicial Branch Supervisory Support and Accountability

Similar to the employee feedback about commitment, focus group participants also stressed the importance of supervisory support and accountability. The focus group participants noted that training and resources alone will not improve Judicial Branch cultural competency. Supervisors play an important role in making sure the commitment is followed through at the office level. Cultural Competency training will only achieve the desired outcome if there is a commitment to applying the standards in the office, and holding people accountable for their actions and interactions through the performance appraisal process.

With that in mind, the Advisory Committee has discussed the lack of clear Administrative Policy guidelines on public service expectations (other than the statements contained in Administrative Policy 101: Judicial Branch Mission), and that the current performance appraisal forms used by the Branch do not contain a specific performance element or standard to evaluate an employee's performance in the area of public service. The Advisory Committee has prepared a proposal to incorporate the stated expectations for all employees found within the Branch's strategic plan to the performance appraisal process for Branch employees. A copy of that proposal is attached.

4) A Need For Training

The focus groups strongly expressed a need for training on cultural competency. Employees felt that cultural competency training was not a one-size fits all topic and that it should come in multiple forms. The following are several suggestions from the focus group participants:

- Develop a Branch-wide training program to ensure employees from all divisions and units could equally attend
- Build on the skills covered in the Diversity Advantage program for new employees
- Deliver training at the local and or regional level
- Develop an introductory course
- Supplement formal instruction with facilitated discussions and community presentations

The Advisory Committee has prepared an introductory course to cultural competency. Members of the Advisory Committee have delivered a pilot course through the CSSD training academy to new employees for Adult Probation, Family Relations and Juvenile Detention. The Advisory Committee continues to refine the curriculum and the course delivery, and anticipates piloting an introductory course Branch-wide for employees in 2013.

5) The Connection to Other Branch Efforts and Activities

Through the focus group sessions, members of the Advisory Committee became aware of how much Branch employees connected cultural competency to other Branch activities, such as Limited English Proficiency (LEP), Americans with Disabilities (ADA), Diversity Training, and various Judicial Branch community outreach efforts. Cultural Competency is not an isolated activity that the Advisory Committee alone can work to improve. The Branch should take a broader look at the existing activities occurring within the various offices and departments and how those activities all support the Judicial Branch's goal to improve its level of cultural competency.

To help foster this approach, the Advisory Committee has developed a "What's Happening" page on its website that can serve as a central repository for divisions and units to highlight and share upcoming activities that support the Branch's goal to deliver cultural competent service.



Connecticut Judicial Branch Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency



2011 Focus Group Results Summary

During the month of November 2011, the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency conducted focus groups throughout the Judicial Districts. These focus groups were facilitated by Judicial Branch staff and were comprised of employees from all Judicial Branch divisions. The information gathered from the focus groups will be used in our effort to develop a Branch wide training program to promote cultural competency for all employees.

The information on the following pages was compiled from the participants' responses to these questions:

1. What does cultural competency mean to you?
2. What topics or issues related to cultural competency do you face in your position or division?
3. In what areas do you believe the Judicial Branch could be more culturally competent? Please explain how.
4. How will a better understanding of cultural competency help you and your co-workers perform at work and deliver quality public service?
5. Please review the Branch's working definition of cultural competency. Do you believe the definition accurately captures what you shared and discussed today?

For each question, we have provided a composite set of responses to reflect the participants' suggestions, examples, and issues. If anyone would like additional information or details about the focus groups or the responses please contact an Advisory Committee member or contact the Advisory Committee directly at AdvisoryCommitteeCulturalCompetency@jud.ct.gov.

1. What does cultural competency mean to you?

- Participants generally agreed that cultural competency means being aware of the multiple cultures within the Branch itself and the community we serve, and also of the multiple subcultures within cultures.

- Cultural competency includes an awareness of personal biases and our stereotypes about cultures and behaviors.
- Cultural competence includes the basic principles of respect and public service.
- Participants stressed that culture includes more than race and ethnicity, and named (without claiming to cover every aspect) socio-economic status, language, religion, gender, dress, geographic location, foods, music, language, age, behavior, and values.
- Participants called for policies and procedures that are inclusive, including but not limited to hiring, promotion, and retention.
- They also called for training and education opportunities for all staff, with the goal that everyone should give and receive respect, with a cultural understanding of the various populations that the Judicial Branch serves, in order to provide quality services.
- In calling for training and education opportunities, participants emphasized that cultural competency is the understanding that one can never be truly competent and that it is something that is always evolving.
- Participants believed that the Branch's commitment to cultural competency incorporated those protections offered by the Equal Employment Opportunity Laws as established by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and those thereafter.

2. What topics or issues related to cultural competency do you face in your position or division?

- Participants continued to stress the themes they shared in discussing the first question.
- Participants felt that the public perception is that the Branch is not culturally sensitive or competent based on staff behavior. They pointed to the inflexibility of court rules and that both its facilities and procedures can be overwhelming and intimidating.
- Participants emphasized that the core function of Judicial Branch staff is to serve the public, and that too often the staff makes assumptions and acts on stereotype beliefs or biases. They are concerned that the staff may have become desensitized. This is made more difficult and frustrating in that the Branch staff often does not reflect the cultural make up of the community we serve.
- The focus of cultural competency should be to develop a skill set for employees to better serve the public, to broaden the concepts of cultural competency, and to emphasize compassion, understanding, and respect.
- Participants called for expanded use of tools such as Language Line but also recommended the availability of basic language instruction.
- Participants were also concerned about problems with the work culture, where another employee may say something offensive; how to handle this, especially if the other employee had seniority or longtime service, was of special concern.

3. In what areas do you believe the Judicial Branch could be more culturally competent? Please explain how.

- Participants' responses to this question were detailed and extensive, and are difficult to adequately capture. The following only summarizes the amount of material developed by the focus groups.
- Participants responded that cultural competency needs to start at the top. It is one part of public service and must be included into our core functions. There must be a commitment to providing resources and to accountability in the area of public service.
- Participants asked for training, to recognize that cultural competency is a goal which cannot be fully achieved, and that cultures are constantly evolving and changing.
- Participants repeatedly noted that training will only achieve the desired outcome if there is a commitment to applying the standards in the office and holding people accountable for their actions and interactions through the performance appraisal process.
- They recommended (in this question and others) that training be decentralized, and be mandatory for all staff and judges.
- They also emphasized the role of managers and supervisors to encourage employees to attend, to model behavior themselves, to support attendance, and to support the application of the learning to the work place.
- Building on earlier questions, the participants emphasized the need to address language barriers. Additionally, they examined perceptions of the Branch from the public and discussed how to address both sides of this issue: to try to change the perception through improving cultural competency while at the same time maintaining a framework within which the court maintains its standards, dignity and respect.
- The groups were sensitive to the differing cultures within the Branch, not only the culture the employees bring with them to the workplace, but also how the workplace has its own culture, which can vary from unit to unit, district to district, division to division. Understanding and working within this framework was seen as an important cultural competency goal.
- The participants asked that the Branch examine its current resources and processes. They brought up a wide range of issues, including signage, language barriers, kiosks, self-represented litigant services, plain language, and the need for additional interpreters. Discussions were lengthy and detailed.

4. How will a better understanding of cultural competency help you and your co-workers perform at work and deliver quality public service?

- The groups all agreed that cultural competency leads to an improved ability to work with different types of people (both the public and coworkers) which leads directly to improved efficiency and effectiveness.
- Participants said that Judicial Branch positions are high profile and that we need to provide the highest level of service. Improved cultural competency is important.
- Developing this theme, many mentioned that this also translated into safety: how to not escalate already high stress situations.

- Cultural competency also leads to increased expectations of professionalism, respect, morale, self-confidence, productivity, and cooperation in the work place, as well as improved communication within and between units and divisions, among employees, and between staff and supervisors.
- The groups also built on previous areas of discussion including training and resources.

5. Please review the Judicial Branch’s working definition of cultural competency. Do you believe the definition accurately captures what you shared and discussed today?

The definition presented to the participants was:

Cultural competence is a set of behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals to enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

In practice it means that a person learns to recognize and reject his or her assumptions about culture; focuses on understanding information provided by an individual within the context at hand; and foregoes the temptation to classify or label persons with cultural misinformation. It is the ability to communicate, cooperate and work with people from all cultural identities in a way that promotes respect, dignity and fairness.

- There were three repeated suggestions for improvements:
 - Certain words used in the definition were signaled out: ‘**reject**’ was found to be far too negative and should be removed; others found ‘**competency**’ to be limiting and may send the wrong message.
 - There was general support that the definition should start with the last line:
It is the ability to communicate, cooperate and work with people from all cultural identities in a way that promotes respect, dignity and fairness. But that the definition should be modified to include the four core values: respect, fairness, professionalism, and integrity.
 - Some participants felt the definition was too wordy and too much in legalese. It was described as wordy, confusing, formal, strict, and intimidating. It was noted that if it looks like policy, it will behave like policy. It was strongly felt that cultural competency is a culture change in the Judicial Branch not a policy.

**Internal Judicial Branch Focus Groups Schedule
 November/ December 2011
 10 Focus Groups: 88 participants**

Date	Location	Facilitators	Time	# Participants
11/18/2011	99 East River Drive (Manchester, Tolland, Enfield, East Hartford)	Paul Bourdoulous Precious Hyland	2:00 pm 4:00 pm	13
11/21/2011	830 Grand Ave New Haven	Troy Brown Ines Nieves	9:30 am 11:30 am	10
11/22/2011	61 Woodland Street (Regional Supervisors)	Troy Brown Ines Nieves	9:30 am 11:30 am	10
11/28/2011	Stamford Court (Stamford, Norwalk)	Ann Foley Dennis Harrell	1:00 pm 3:00 pm	9
11/28/2011	225 Spring St Wethersfield (Hartford Area)	Karen Chorney Al Hyla	9:00 am 11:00 am	8
11/29/2011	Norwich JD Court (Putnam, Windham, New London, Norwich)	Paul Bourdoulous Precious Hyland	2:00 pm 4:00 pm	8
11/29/2011	Middletown Court (Middlesex JD)	Ryan Labeniec Desiree Biggs	9:30 am 11:30 am	8
11/30/2011	Waterbury Court Room 222 (Waterbury area)	Esther Harris Laura DiFelice	10:00 am 12:00 pm	6
11/30/2011	99 East River Drive (Hartford Area)	Karen Chorney Al Hyla	9:00 am 11:00 am	8
12/01/2011	One Lafayette Bridgeport	Dennis Harrell Ann Foley	9:00 am 11:00 am	8



Connecticut Judicial Branch Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency



2012 Focus Group Results Summary

During the month of June 2012, the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency conducted the second round of focus groups throughout the Judicial Districts. These focus groups were facilitated by Judicial Branch staff and were comprised of employees from all Judicial Branch divisions. The information gathered from the focus groups will be used in our effort to develop a Branch wide training program to promote cultural competency for all employees.

The information on the following pages was compiled from the participants' responses to these questions:

1. What does cultural competency mean to you?
2. What topics or issues related to cultural competency do you face in your position or division?
3. In what areas do you believe the Judicial Branch could be more culturally competent? Please explain how.
4. How will a better understanding of cultural competency help you and your co-workers perform at work and deliver quality public service?
5. Please review the Branch's working definition of cultural competency. Do you believe the definition accurately captures what you shared and discussed today?

For each question, we have provided a composite set of responses to reflect the participants' suggestions, examples, and issues. If anyone would like additional information or details about the focus groups or the responses please contact an Advisory Committee member or contact the Advisory Committee directly at AdvisoryCommitteeCulturalCompetency@jud.ct.gov .

General thoughts: One group was very positive about the focus group process, and said they were glad that the staff 'in the trenches' were being asked, glad the Branch had turned the pyramid upside down.

1. What does cultural competency mean to you?

- Participants stressed that everyone does not share the same norms, behavior, beliefs, culture, values, etc., and that an awareness or recognition of this is essential.
- We want to be knowledgeable and objective at the same time.
- Participants explored cultural differences and expressed the wide variety of cultures and subcultures: business culture within an organization; language (and not confusing language with lack of education); education; age related, groups of religions; values and traditions.
- Participants defined cultural competency in terms of understanding, a willingness to be knowledgeable and open-minded; non judgmental; respectful of differences; awareness of self and one's own biases; respectful of the unfamiliar.
- One group described it as 'we should see where they are at and incorporate that into our world.'
- Participants pointed to focusing on similarities which might not be immediately obvious due to differences; a group described it as embracing the similarities and the differences.
- Participants stressed that differences exist between staff and the public, but also between members of the branch, and between supervisors and workers. Participants asked for top-down competency. Participants point out that we should treat each other with the same cultural awareness that we treat clients.
- Participants stressed individual development; that culturally everyone is individual; that the basic understanding as a starting point, to get the global foundation, and then go beyond it.
- Cultural competency means *challenges*. Clients can teach us a lot.

2. What topics or issues related to cultural competency do you face in your position or division?

- The types of cultural differences encountered included: parenting styles and beliefs; where and how brought up; race, ethnicity, ancestry; education levels; income levels, including homelessness; music; pop culture; language; disabilities; dress; how elders are treated and age-ism; religious and cultural celebrations and holidays; family dynamics and differing attitudes towards domestic violence; male cultural issues; LGBTQI and transgender, especially those in process. Family dynamics were stressed; recognizing decision maker in a family or the family makeup, with grandparents, aunts, friends – how they perceived the family and how it impacts, for example, the raising of a child. Groups stressed that there are different subcultures within cultures, and assumptions just cannot be made.
- Participants noted that the cultures and subcultures can change over time.
- Participants point out that Court is a scary place and very intimidating. They pointed to how the court's culture itself can affect people who come to court. They also appreciate that the Marshals are the first point of contact for the people coming to court and how very important this first contact is. If a client is already agitated and is greeted with a smile and kindness they can calm down and change attitude, leading to positive outcomes.
- Participants recognized that each court has a unique cultural base and wanted to become more familiar with the unique needs of those who come to the court from their catchment area.
- A primary concern of participants was communications barriers. They want to provide equal service to all. They pointed to difficulties in language, in interpreting different dialects within

languages, the difficulty of interpreting accurately. A group also pointed out that interpreters only interpret, they do not explain, so that clients can understand but not know what they are doing or need to do. Clients are most appreciative, they point out, when asked instead of assuming. Care must be taken when doing intakes to be sensitive to family present.

- Groups pointed to the need for signage and forms in, primarily Spanish, but also pointed out that forms even when written in Spanish must be filled out in English. Participants stressed the need for more interpreters, both Spanish and other languages. Participants also noted that the public is not always aware of what services may be available to be able to ask for them.
- Participants were concerned with multiple agencies, both Judicial and non-judicial, accommodate families with language barriers, and the need to help them better understand the services available.
- Participants also pointed to the use of legal jargon or legalese; sometimes even different groups within the Branch do not understand other groups (for example, CSSD Family to SES to Family Clerk). Staff should think of 'bringing them down to the public's level' so that understanding can take place. Need to build rapport, trust, respect. Ability to provide equal service despite the barriers.
- The willingness to address cultural issues on the part of the staff was stressed by participants. Their concern over a perceived lack of willingness heard in comments such as "You're in American now, speak American."
- Participants stressed the importance of remaining neutral and not judging; of not making assumptions based on ethnicity, appearance, name, how many accompany the person to court, or why the person is in court. They warned against preconceived notions about cultures, both of the patrons and of the staff. They pointed out that changing techniques (and being flexible) based on cultural awareness allowed them to get to the desired outcome.
- More than one group pointed out that technology is cultural – the Branch is behind the times in accepting and utilizing technology. Electronic service of process; litigant job search expectations; court expectations – for example, a cellphone is "necessary" in today's world.
- Participants pointed to cultural differences concerning clothes and the courts' expectations: sending a person home to change into something more appropriate for the courtroom can lead to wasted court time, staff time, and both parties' time.
- Participants wanted to address cultural issues within the employee population. There was concern that cultural awareness needed to be top down; that awareness needed to include differences within the cultures of the staff. Separation between personal and professional life is important. An example was assuming that a staff member who was bicultural was also bilingual and could competently interpret, even if the staff member's subculture differed; assumptions made about ethnicity based on name alone; pulling bilingual staff off their job duties to interpret. Participants also pointed to culture within the workforce that they felt should be addressed, including transparency and treatment of support staff. A group said that each office has its own office stereotypes and that we do not take the time to identify and address. Office staff should be more supportive of their own differences.
- In the work place, awareness of education and knowledge level in assigning and distributing work; be aware of perceptions and expectations of job class/title; knowledge level. Supervisors need to be aware of communication barriers; of different treatment of male and female; to over come them and focus on ability to do job. Also ensure staff and colleagues

are not showing inappropriate or disrespectful behavior. Find different levels of cultural competency.

3. In what areas do you believe the Judicial Branch could be more culturally competent? Please explain how.

- The groups commented on how helpful and useful the Court Service Centers are in providing improved service to self-represented parties, how they are more sensitive and respect to the public. But they stressed that this is only a positive when the centers are actually staffed and open; there is no backup or resource commitment. Participants noted the irony with the ACCC and improving the level of respect with the public and the apparent disconnect with providing the basic resources to achieve that improved level of respect.
- Limited resources continues to be a big problem and one that really interferes with proper public service and treatment of the public. Participants were tired of hearing “*Do more with less*” and feel they have hit the breaking point. ACCC seems like another effort to do more with less – and still no court service center resources.
- Participants wanted Court Service Center hours expanded and pointed to other services which should be expanded: Advice Days, availability of interpreters, more hearing impaired resources. A suggestion that retired persons could be brought in as volunteers.
- Every group focused on training. Participants stressed that training should be mandatory, ongoing, every year or more; that there should be more trainings offered; wanted training and refreshers; including the ability to ask questions, the ability to feel safe to participate. The participants pointed out that online training, without personal interaction among trainees, would not be appropriate for Cultural Competency training. A mix of deliveries, such as found in LEP, would be acceptable (positive comments about LEP). In one group, the participants felt that the Branch needed to improve in helping limited English proficient customers and wanted to know more about the Branch’s LEP efforts. Rosetta Stone programs and Wheeler Training site was mentioned, as well as community programs.
- Participants suggested that training could also be accomplished through brown bag lunches, through peer to peer interaction, through Diversity Day. Participants suggested that we could find subject matter experts in house, but others also suggested bringing people in from the outside. One of the suggestions repeated across groups was to have peers share how they have dealt positively with situations, providing these tools to their coworkers. Participants suggested open houses in the courthouses to introduce people to the process at court. Participants also stressed that it was good to have the training brought out to them; there was less time out of the office and they were interacting with their co-workers instead of individually going to a centralized training site. Participants also asked that training be mixed, to include supervisors and even Judges in a group.
- Groups also suggested that treatment providers also have training, as well as Public Defenders, Prosecutors.
- Participants across all groups wanted to have more information on the cultures and subcultures they deal with in the particular courthouse location. Suggestions included

the use of language cheat sheets to help in communicating. An example was of transgender people whose needs are unique.

- Participants noted that each courthouse has its own culture, and that the court culture also has an effect on the members of the public. Many participants suggest that change (to cultural competency) had to come from the top down. One group suggested that the Judges, who all bring their own personality to the bench, have a huge impact on the public, and that working with them is critical. Other groups were concerned of a distance created between administration and operations staffs. Participants also called for improved communication among departments. Current environment has information coming from many different directions. A suggestion was to have staff doing the same job around the state meet to exchange ideas and to help foster consistency.
- All groups' participants focused on communication. They stressed that they needed tools to improve their ability to communicate. They wanted more Language Line training, more dual handset phones. They asked for dynamic speaker phone equipment where speaking into the handset is not required. They wanted language cheat sheets, and training in some basic language skills for the cultures they have the most to do with.
- A group pointed to giving clients an easy explanation of rules and tasks so that they can better understand. They pointed to how confusing our forms can be and provided, as an example, how confusing our own HR forms can be.
- A group suggested that judges be trained to understand the possible bias against people representing themselves, which they felt can have a racial undertone.
- As with all questions, participants stressed sensitivity, communication, not making assumptions or judgments. Examples included not assuming all black people speak 'Ebonics'; not saying something 'funny' which turns out actually to be insulting. Participants asked that service providers be also held to the same standards and that contract provisions concerning them be enforced. Participants also stressed the need for patience along with respect. Another group pointed to visiting in a client's home and to be sensitive to cultural difference. Services provided to the client may be offensive to them. Provide multiple options so that a service can be effectively delivered.
- One group stated that 'technology is cultural' and felt that the Branch was behind the times in utilizing it. Another group stated that it was important to allow staff access to internet tools to improve their job performance and communication. Participants asked that when new technology is developed, that it cultural awareness be built in, for example, in E-services.
- Participants focused on the need for cultural awareness and responsiveness within the workplace; not making assumptions based on a co-workers name, ethnicity, etc; to improve both morale and judgments.
- One group faced the issue of nepotism in hiring; it was felt that it is not admitted but it is often the most important factor in selecting candidates. "If we say diversity is important. . .then make it important, otherwise it is just words. Judicial is not prepared to walk the walk." Another also group felt also that bias in the interviewing/hiring process must be addressed.

4. How will a better understanding of cultural competency help you and your co-workers perform at work and deliver quality public service?

- Knowledge is power. Learning is a good thing.
- Get the job done!
- Participants felt that cultural awareness would increase sensitivity, compassion and respect for both clients and coworkers. A basic sense of fairness. Beyond being admirable, these will have direct and immediate positive consequences in the workplace.
- Participants all felt that understanding and using tools to deal with cultural differences (e.g., language barriers) will lead directly to increased productivity and reduced stress, as well as improved assessments and supervision. Additionally, they felt that there would be fewer delays, fewer repeat meetings (do what needs to be done the first time), and increased quality in their productivity. In the extreme, it can help to avoid violence, news exposure, people getting hurt.
- Participants said that we can avoid the impact of cultural barriers, which can lead to people feeling marginalized and excluded.
- The need for decreased time spent communicating and fixing miscommunications results directly in reduced costs.
- Participants were concerned those who do not understand language will not understand the proceedings. Sensitivity to cultural issues helps us to better assess situations and can result in better knowledge of real needs and more awareness of gaps in service. To understand families better and what they need. To have compassion means less frustration.
- Better understanding of our job functions and portray a better image of the branch. Fewer lawsuits and HR issues.
- Participants pointed to reduced recidivism, pointing out that customers appreciate the respect shown to them and work harder for themselves. Treating clients better results in better outcomes. Participants also believed that cultural awareness can help to be more sensitive when handing out bad news. Being aware of your own bias will help to have a better understanding of customers and what they are going through.
- Participants felt that cultural awareness will also make the interactions among staff and between staff and management will lead to increased productivity, less stress and a smoother running organization to accomplish a common goal. Employees will have more pride and take a greater responsibility in their job. Collaboration and team work to help each other to move forward. Participants emphasized that cultural awareness rolls down from management and supervisors, that all employees should not be lumped together, and that we should hold ourselves accountable internally. For colleagues, it will result in improved communications, improved performance and awareness of differences as an asset

5. Please review the Judicial Branch's working definition of cultural competency. Do you believe the definition accurately captures what you shared and discussed today?

The definition presented to the participants was:

Cultural competence is a set of behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals to enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

In practice it means that a person learns to recognize and reject his or her assumptions about culture; focuses on understanding information provided by an individual within the context at hand; and foregoes the temptation to classify or label persons with cultural misinformation. It is the ability to communicate, cooperate and work with people from all cultural identities in a way that promotes respect, dignity and fairness.

- Participants asked who is going to see the definition? Appears to be geared toward Branch staff and doesn't seem to take into account the public. Sounds more like a mission statement than a definition.
- Participants felt that "cultural competence" should be replaced by "cultural awareness", as it was agreed that cultural competency can never be totally achieved. Another group felt that more work had to be done to define competence. Participants also felt that the notion of an ongoing and dynamic, not static, process was important.
- Certain words used in the definition were singled out: '**reject**' – why should I reject something I feel or think? Replace this, and other words, with a positive and not negative words and phrases. Some assumptions may be correct and positive! Gear it towards making employees feel valued, not that they have been doing something wrong. Needs to be more humane in the beginning! Talk about behaviors, attitudes and policy.
- Participants also felt it left out some concepts: core gender issues; words such as "community and skills". Include respect, understanding of other cultures.
- Many participants felt that the first sentence did not need to be in the definition, that it was more behavior than policy. Almost all participants felt the last sentence was perfect and should be close to what the whole definition is:
It is the ability to communicate, cooperate and work with people from all cultural identities in a way that promotes respect, dignity and fairness. But that the definition should be modified to include the four core values: respect, fairness, professionalism, and integrity. "Nice framework but needs more substance."
- Participants felt the definition was too formal, too long, cold, a little rough; cluttered. Less legalese, which leads to misunderstanding within workforce.

Note: Participants repeatedly stated that the process is an ongoing one, that it should be considered a process and not an end.

Note: Participants pointed out the following distinction:

Diversity training – to promote an awareness of differences around us; cultural competency training to foster an understanding of yourself first and then an ability to work with different cultures around you. Others felt that competency was a natural progression from diversity.

Note: one set of facilitators noted that the participants were not very interested in discussing the working definition but wanted to return to ways of really improving their cultural awareness and acquiring tools to improve their ability to work with and within other cultures and subcultures, and their own workplace. Another group, nonetheless, put a great deal of effort into this question. Yet another group said there is need for more than a definition but guidelines on how to follow through.

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